

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 XMB-02
OPIC-03 AGRE-00 CEA-01 COME-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-10
INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 PA-01 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15
STR-07 ITC-01 TRSE-00 SP-02 SOE-02 OMB-01 DOE-15
BIB-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 NEA-10 OIC-02 HA-05
JUSE-00 /163 W

-----047491 251324Z /46

O R 251259Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8482
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION GENEVA

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USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, OECD, MTN, UK
SUBJECT: IBA ANNOUNCES NEW FOREIGN PROGRAMMING QUOTAS

REF: LONDON 11613

1. THE IBA ON JULY 24 HELD ITS PRESS CONFERENCE TO REVEAL NEW FOREIGN PROGRAMMING QUOTAS. THE ANNOUNCEMENT PROMPTED MODERATELY EXTENSIVE PRESS TREATMENT TODAY ON INSIDE PAGES OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, THE TIMES, AND THE FINANCIAL TIMES. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE IBA'S ANNOUNCEMENT WAS SIMILAR TO, AND PROBABLY IDENTICAL TO, THE ADVANCE VERSION WHICH THE EMBASSY HAS MAILED TO WASHINGTON.

2. PRESS TREATMENT MAY BE OF INTEREST. ALL THREE
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PAPERS HEAD THEIR ARTICLES SIMILARLY. THE DAILY TELEGRAPH: "ITV ORDERED TO REDUCE FOREIGN PROGRAMMES." THE TIMES: "COMMERCIAL TV TO CUT FOREIGN PROGRAMMES." THE FINANCIAL TIMES: "CHANGE IN RULES MEANS FEWER FOREIGN PROGRAMMES ON ITV."

3. THE FINANCIAL TIMES STORY READS AS FOLLOWS (ONE

PARAGRAPH DELETED):

TIGHTER RULES ON THE AMOUNT OF
FOREIGN MATERIAL ON ITV, INTRODUCED
BY THE INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING AUTHORITY,
WILL MEAN A CUT IN U.S. PROGRAMMES ON
BRITISH SCREENS. THE AVERAGE AMOUNT OF
HOME-PRODUCED MATERIAL IS BEING RAISED
FROM 84 PER CENT TO 86 PER CENT - ALTHOUGH
IN PEAK HOURS THE EFFECTIVE CUT IN IM-
PORTED PROGRAMMING IS FROM AROUND A QUARTER
TO JUST OVER A FIFTH.

TRADITIONALLY MOST ITV IMPORTED
MATERIAL COMES FROM THE U.S. AND MOST
OF THAT GOES ON THE AIR IN PEAK HOURS.
EVEN THE NEW RULES MEAN THAT A PRO-
GRAMME COMPANY CAN, IN THEORY, DEVOTE
MORE THAN 30 PER CENT OF ITS PEAK PRO-
GRAMME TIME TO OLD FEATURE FILMS AND
IMPORTED MATERIAL.

IMPORTED NEWS AND SPORTS MATERIAL,
SUCH AS THE OLYMPICS OR WORLD CUP, ARE NOT
COUNTED AS FOREIGN PROGRAMMING. "THE NEW
RULES TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE BENEFITS TO
THE TELEVISION SERVICE OF POPULAR AND
DISTINGUISHED PROGRAMMES FROM OVERSEAS,"
THE IBA SAID LAST NIGHT. "BUT THE AIM
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IS TO IMPROVE FURTHER THE BRITISH FLAVOUR
OF THE SCHEDULES TO GIVE ADDED SCOPE TO
THE TALENTS WORKING IN TELEVISION IN THE
UK."

UNDER THE RULES, ALL MATERIAL FROM
OUTSIDE THE UK WILL BE CLASSIFIED AS

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NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 AGRE-00
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LAB-04 PA-01 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15 STR-07 ITC-01
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OPIC-03 OIC-02 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 NEA-10 HA-05
JUSE-00 /163 W

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FOREIGN, REGARDLESS OF ITS ORIGIN.
THE OLD RULES HAD SPECIAL SECTIONS FOR
COMMONWEALTH MATERIAL. THE LOWER AVER-
AGE FOREIGN-PRODUCED PERCENTAGE OF 14
PER CENT WILL BE REACHED IN STAGES BY
THE SUMMER OF 1979 AND COMPANIES WILL BE
JUDGED ON A SIX-MONTHLY AVERAGE PERFORM-
ANCE.

IN THE PEAK HOURS OF 6.30-10.30
MONDAYS TO SATURDAYS AND 7.15-10.30 ON
SUNDAYS THE MAXIMUM OF OVERSEAS MATERIAL
IN ANY WEEK WILL BE FIVE AND A HALF HOURS.
CO-PRODUCTIONS WILL BE INDIVIDUALLY AS-
SESSED AS TO WHETHER THEY ARE BRITISH OR
FOREIGN.

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4. THE TIMES REPORTS ADDITIONALLY: "THE COMPANIES
WERE SAID YESTERDAY TO BE NOT PARTICULARLY PLEASED
AT THE PROSPECT OF A CHANGE; THE REDUCTION IS ONLY
TWO HOURS IN A 100-HOUR VIEWING WEEK, AND EQUITY,
THE ACTOR'S UNION, THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE MORE IN
VIEW OF 'THE GIGANTIC PROFITS' OF THE INDEPENDENT
COMPANIES. MR. COLIN SHAW, IBA DIRECTOR OF TELEVISION,
SAID AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IT WAS THE FIRST ALTERA-
TION TO BE MADE IN THE QUOTA ARRANGEMENTS, WHICH IN
FUTURE WOULD BE SUBJECT TO AN ANNUAL REVIEW....IN
THE 12 MONTHS UP TO THE MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR THE
COMPANIES SPENT 7.5 MILLION POUNDS ON 'ACQUIRED
MATERIAL,' TWO-THIRDS FROM OVERSEAS. THE BBC'S

PROPORTION OF HOME-PRODUCED MATERIAL, AT 84 PERCENT
FOR 1976-77 WAS THE SAME AS THE COMPANIES'."

5. AN EMBASSY OFFICER HAS TALKED TO HOWARD KARSHAN
OF VIACOM AND DRAWN THE LATTER'S ATTENTION TO THE
PRESS STORIES. KARSHAN REPORTED THAT LESLIE HALLIWELL,
THE CHIEF FILM PURCHASER FOR THE INDEPENDENT TV
COMPANIES, TOLD HIM AT LUNCH YESTERDAY THAT THE
EVENTUAL IBA GOAL IS A 12 PERCENT U.S. SHARE IN
PROGRAMMING.

BREWSTER

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